Urban Poverty Deepening in Metropolitan Cities

1640. SHRI JAGMOHAN : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether urban poverty has been deepening and per capita availability of land in the metropolitan cities is declining ;

(b) whether after the recent 'Economic Reforms' and promulgation of New Housing Policy rents and land prices have shot up in these cities ;

(c) whether Nehru Rozgar Yojana and other Government schemes have failed to make any dent on the problem ; and

(d) what measures have been taken or are being contemplated, to check the growing imbalances and arrest the fast-worsening situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P. K. THUNGON) : (a) Though specific data pertaining to the estimates of Urban poverty in the Metropolitan cities is not available, as per the estimates of urban poverty at the national level as made by the Planning Commission it is found to decline from 28.1% in 1983-84 to 20.1% in 1987-88. Further, as per the Report of the Expert Group on Estimation of proportion and Number of poor constituted by the Planning Commission, the incidence of urban poverty has declined from 42.15% in 1983 to 40.12% in 1987-88. It is a fact that per capita availability of land in the Metropolitan Cities has been declining due to increase in population and influx of migrant population to these cities from the small towns and rural hinterland of the country.

(b) Increase in rent and land prices in Metropolitan cities has no direct relevance to the Economic Reforms and New Housing Policy. In fact, New Housing Policy aims at arresting this trend by way of increased supply of serviced land and rental housing through various administrative and legislative reforms.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Apart from implementing the existing schemes effectively, the Government is going to take up an integrated scheme for amelioration of urban poverty known as the Prime Minister's Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme which was announced by the Prime Minister on 15th of August, 1994. The specific objectives under the new programme, will be, interalia, the skill upgradation and employment generation. The scheme in proposed to be implemented in Class-II towns of the Country and is expected to help arress the influx of migration to the metroplitan cities.

Neglected Town Planning

1641. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) what are the reasons for neglected Town Planning in the country;

(b) the problems arising as a result of neglected town planning; and

(c) the steps taken to improve the situation especially in populated cities ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P.K. THUNGON) : (a) Town Planning is a State subject and falls within the jurisdiction of State Governments. Depending on policies of State Governments and their Urban Development Authorities and Municipalities, the degree of effectiveness of town planning varies from town to town and State to State. No generalisation is, therefore, possible regarding neglect of town planning or reasons thereof.

(b) The problems which arise in a situation of neglected town planning includes shortage of housing and infrastructural facilities, proliferation of slums and squatter area, deteriorating environmental conditions, traffic congestion etc.

(c) The steps taken by the Government of India include :

(i) Introduction of centrally sponsored scheme for mega cities to be applicable to Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Hyderabad and Banglore for improvement of infrastuctural facilities thereof.

(ii) Implementation of a number of centrally sponsored schemes such as Integrated Development Small and Medium Towns, Nehru Rozgar Yojana, Urban Basic Services for the Poor, Low Cost Sanitation for Liberation of Scavengers etc.

(iii) Development of National Housing Policy Document.

(iv) Securing financial assistance from external funding agencies for development of cities. towns such as World Bank, ADB, ODA (UK), OECF (Japan).

(v) The enactment of 74th Consitutional Amendment Act, 1992 which envisages town planning and planning for social and economic development as legitimate municipal functions under the 12th Schedule of the Constitution.

Notification Classifying Allottees Under Rehabilitation Schemes

1642. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have issued any notification classifying the original allottees who are in possession of the allotted lands under the Rehabilitation Schemes. separately and provide them a reduced rate of conversion fee on connection with the conversion of leasehold properties into freehold in Delhi; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P.K. THUNGON) : (a) No, Sir. The matter is still under consideration of the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

Involvement of DDA Officials in Property Rackets

1643. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a large number of property rackets involving officials of DDA who allowed (i) the Skipper Construction Company (Pvt.) Ltd., New Delhi to take possession of Jhandewallan Tower land, start construction and sell flats before fully recovering this auction amount of the land as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 30th Novemver, 1994 and (ii) issued an advertisement for inviting applications from DDA's SFS's registrants for the Mud Village Society Complex, a real estate racket in which several people were made to shell out lakhs of rupees in the hope of getting flats as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 25th November 1994;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof indicating the names of DDA's officials involved in above rackets; and

(c) what action Government have taken so far to punish the guilty and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P.K. THUNGON) : (a) DDA has reported that M/s. Skipper Construction Company (Pvt.) Ltd. purchase the tower plot at Jhandewalan in the open auction held on 8-10-80 for a sum of Rs. 9.82 crores. 25% of the bid amount was paid as earnest money at the fall of hammer and the remaining 75% was required to be paid by 13-1-81, i.e. within 80 days of the issue of demand letter. The auction purchaser, however, failed to deposit the demanded amount within the stipulated time and quested for payment in instalments. After detailed examination of the case. DDA was directed by Government to hand over possession of the plot to the auction-purchaser on receipt of 50% of the total premium and remaining 50% premium was allowed to be paid in 5 equated half yearly instalments of Rs. 1,94,36,900. Pursuant to the directions of Government, the auction-purchaser paid the 50% of the premium of the plot & executed the agreement to pay the instalments and also executed the Licence Deed in respect of the tower plot. Thereupon the possession of the plot was handed over to the auction-purchaser on 11-8-87 on licence basis to commence the construction